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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

<<http://www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/pulpit20011206.html>> effectively summarises the most gross errors in the settlement details.

As for the front of the settlement in general, how about Microsoft - rather than being able to freely run rampant through the education market with the government's blessing, smashing a market which has remained competitive so far - provide a more realistic sum (\$10 billion [or more] US seems less laughable) for an independant third-party - government assigned board of industry specialists - to purchase and distribute hardware and software amongst the proposed users - low end schools, charity's etc. This board could adopt a multi-platform approach, utilising a full range of the available resources - Apple and Intel/AMD/etc hardware, Sun, MacOS, Linux [various flavours], Solaris, maybe some Unix distro's, etc.

The end result would be a 'seeded market', full of a wide range of different vendors, who can then compete after the settlement, providing motivation to lower prices and provide superior products, due to the investment already made by those vendors in the settlement.

In addition to this, those who suffered from Microsoft's disreputable practises must be compensated. The current settlement offers absolutely nothing for this, and one would think this would be the aim of the entire case. This is not a morale issue being debated. If it was, it would not have taken 2 years to reach any kind of verdict, let alone resolution. Microsoft are inarguably morally unjust, even now. They have mocked the entire case through to the present moment, and will continue to do so, by repeatedly applying the same tactics to current markets that they did to past ones, the tactics and practises which brought about the court case in the first place.

No, this is purely a money-case, with no direct morale issues being accounted for. So, money must be granted to those who deserve it. The individuals and companies which were crushed by Microsoft's illegal practises. A sad irony that many of those companies no longer exist because of Microsoft, but their founders and past employee's could be tracked down and compensated appropriately.

And final third step to ensure Microsoft cannot run _too_ rampant in future would be to assign 49% of it's total stock to a wide range of companies and individuals outside of Microsoft as a two-fold attack. These companies would then be better able to survive Microsoft's monopoly if they received dividends directly from it, and by having such a substantial share of the company, the majority would be able to have

substantial influence on the companies lesser workings.

It's funny how when some /non-American/ guy in some far off country blows up a few buildings, it only takes a few days for America's egotistically-run government to blow the crap out of that country, even with the knowledge he's not even there anymore. Yet, a company that has had such a profoundly negative effect on the entire world in so many ways, such that it can be closely compared to the xenophobic conquests of Genghis Khan, is allowed to exist. And if the settlement goes through in it's present state, it'll exist with the support and *help* of the US Government. Insanity, it seems, will need to be redefined to contain this new world.